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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001678

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR, PM, EUR/RPM, EUR/UBI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/05/2010

TAGS: PREL MARR MOPS NL NATO

SUBJECT: DUTCH GOVERNMENT NOTIFIED OF SOESTERBERG

FACILITIES CLOSURE

REF: SECSTATE 100360

CLASSIFIED BY POLCOUNS STEPHEN R. KELLY; REASONS 1.5 (B,D).

1.(C) EMBASSY DELIVERED REFTEL NOTIFICATION TO THE NETHERLANDS MFA ON 6/5. TO DATE, THE MFA HAS MADE NO COMMENT ON THE NOTIFICATION.

2.(SBU) COMMENT IN OTHER FORA ABOUT PREVIOUSLY HELD INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE SOESTERBERG FACILITY TERMINATION HAS BEEN LIMITED. ON MAY 17, IN A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO A LETTER EARLIER SUBMITTED TO THE MOD BY VVD DEFENSE SPOKERPERSON THEO VAN DEN DOEL, STATE SECRETARY FOR DEFENSE HENK VAN HOOF INFORMED THE PARLIAMENT THAT HE HAD BEEN "INFORMED ORALLY BY THE U.S. ON MAY 4 THAT THE COB STATUS OF SOESTERBERG AIR BASE HAD EXPIRED. THE PROMISE WAS MADE THAT THIS WOULD SOON BE CONFIRMED IN WRITING. NOW THAT THE COB STATUS HAS EXPIRED, THE NUMBER OF FLIGHT MOVEMENTS RESERVED FOR JET FIGHTERS HAS BEEN CANCELLED... SINCE THE AIRBASE WILL REMAIN OPEN, THE REQUIRED AND EXISTING FACILITIES TO KEEP IT OPEN MUST BE MAINTAINED. THE BULK OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE'S FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE HAS BEEN GIVEN ANOTHER DESTINATION SINCE THE AMERICAN UNIT LEFT. SOESTERBERG AIR BASE WILL REMAIN THE HOME BASE OF TWO (DUTCH) TRANSPORT HELICOPTER SQUADRONS AND A RESERVE BASE FOR DUTCH F-16'S."

FENDRICK